



American  
Heart  
Association.



The Honorable Jim Tedder  
House Tax Policy Committee  
521 House Office Building  
Lansing, MI 48933

December 12, 2018

Dear Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide perspective on Senate Bill 304 S-1. The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, American Heart Association, and American Lung Association stand opposed to Senate Bill 304 S-1 and ask that the legislation include cigars back under the Other Tobacco Products (OTP) tax rather than codifying the special exception that is provided under the current tobacco tax act.

Tobacco products time and again are the largest source of lung, throat, and mouth cancer globally. Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death in the United States and a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease – the nation's No. 1 killer. Under the current structure, the sale of cigars in Michigan has increased. With the increase in use comes the potential increase in chronic illness such as cancer, CVD, COPD, and more. We support a common-sense tax structure that taxes all tobacco products at the same rate which prevents kids from a lifelong addiction and helps adults quit while providing more revenue to invest in health and education programs for the state.

The amount of tobacco tax revenue that was collected last year was just under \$1 billion, yet the state only invests \$1.6 million in tobacco prevention and cessation programs and services. Lowering the tax on any tobacco product is a step in the wrong direction. Lower prices make these products more accessible to kids and deter those adults who are trying to quit.

Please consider the impact that you are making on Michigan's health. We need to move cigars back under the OTP tax rate where they were before. Cancer and cardiovascular disease from tobacco use is preventable. Please put Michigan first and help us curb cancer and the use of tobacco products. We urge you to vote no on Senate bill 304 S-1. Thank you for your consideration in this important matter.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew R. Schepers".

Andrew R. Schepers  
ACSCAN

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dave J. Hodgkins".

Dave Hodgkins  
American Heart Association

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ken Fletcher".

Ken Fletcher  
American Lung Association